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NEWS RELEASE

Dec. 17, 2007

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VIEW MODERNIST MASTERPIECE AT UM LIBRARY

MISSOULA—

A modernist sculptural masterpiece by Jean Arp will be on view through April 9 at The University of Montana's Mansfield Library.

The sculpture, "Colonne de Rêve" or "Dream Column," is on loan to the Montana Museum of Art & Culture from an anonymous private collector and will be located in the entrance area of the library.

Jean Arp (1886-1966) was a German-born artist admired for his leading role in developing and establishing what is most commonly referred to as biomorphic or organic abstraction.

Arp studied art in Germany and France, but, unhappy with the academic system, was soon involved in avant-garde movements such as The Blue Rider and Dada. His outlook and artistic aims were shaped by the experience of World War I, which for him and many others provided ultimate proof of the bankruptcy of old values in art and society.

The Dada movement, to which Arp belonged from its beginning in 1916, enabled ideas to develop in a climate free from prejudice and academic conventions while encouraging spontaneity. Dada was rich ground for the evolution of his style.

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In the 1930s, Arp began to produce sculptural works, an almost entirely new medium for him. This new series of sculptures shifted from the ironic and caustic content of his Dadaist work to an emphasis on nature as both a model for artistic creation and the source of values that he felt were threatened.

He opposed the Western tradition that considered man superior to the rest of the natural world, an attitude which he believed to be the source of many of the world's problems. In sculpture, he sought to counter this view by offering images that stressed the unity between man and nature.

In her book "Passages in Modern Sculptures," Rosalind Krauss writes that viewing "Colonne de Rêve" encourages a sense of "unfolding through time, like a plant progressing through the morphological stages of its life cycle, changing from seed, to sprout and to bud."

Mansfield Library hours vary throughout the academic year. For library hours, call 406-243-6866 or go online to <http://www.lib.umt.edu>.

For more information, call the Montana Museum of Art & Culture at 406-243-2019 or go to <http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum>.

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NOTE TO MEDIA: A digital image of the Arp sculpture is available on request. Call Karen Rice, MMAC coordinator of programs and publications, at 406-243-2019 or e-mail karen.rice@mso.umt.edu.

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